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ABSTRACT

Trends in poverty and income inequality and potential solutions for such social problems are discussed. The complicated attitudes of the general public toward public policy and social problems are reviewed, with an emphasis on the persistence and intergenerational transmission of poverty, the extent of welfare dependence, and the emergence of an urban underclass. Questions of equal education, of educational policy and practice, and of the treatment of immigrants, minorities, and other disadvantaged groups are discussed briefly throughout the 16 chapters of the collection, but two chapters in particular focus on education as an important piece of the puzzle. Chapter 11, "Education and the Well-Being of the Next Generation," by Richard J. Murnane, argues that it is not sensible to conclude that changes in the quality of U.S. education have resulted in the productivity decline of recent years. The critical question concerning American education relates to the links among education, productivity, and wages in the future. Chapter 12, "Systemic Educational Reform and Social Mobility: The School 'Choice' Controversy," by Charles F. Manski, examines the effects of policy, particularly in the area of parental choice of schools, on the education of disadvantaged youth. (Contains 768 references.) (SLD)

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